



University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Environmental Center

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HB 2889 RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT

**House Committees on
Energy and Environmental Protection
Water and Land Use Planning**

**Joint Public Hearing - February 27, 1996
8:30 A.M., Room 312 State Capitol**

By
John T. Harrison, Environmental Center

HB 2889 tasks the Board of Land and Natural Resources to extensively promote additional use of citizen volunteers in furtherance of its environmental management responsibilities.

Our statement on this measure does not constitute an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

Predictably, particular shortcomings of this proposed measure will likely be expounded in agency and public testimony: it sounds more like a resolution than a legislative act; it constitutes an unfunded mandate to the DLNR; it implies substantive adequacy of unsolicited private funding as a support medium.

Preoccupation with trees obfuscates the forest. The brilliance of this measure lies in its implicit recognition that stakeholders are the best possible environmental managers. On the federal level, the USEPA has recognized this explicitly in their strong advocacy of community-based environmental management. Similarly, in their 1993 treatise on managing wastewater in coastal and urban environments, the National Research Council, with membership drawn from the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, and the Institute of Medicine, stated:

One of the most striking features of the integrated coastal management proposal presented here is its high degree of dependence on local initiative. The necessary planning and decisionmaking can only be accomplished by local organizations in a local setting.

One may fault the unspecificity of implementation of this measure, but why not give the Board of Land and Natural Resources an opportunity to exercise creative leadership.